

Tower Grove Park North Gate
(Magnolia and Tower Grove Avenue Entrance)
Tower Grove Park
4255 Arsenal Street
St. Louis
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1137-C

HABS
MO,
96-SALV,
46C-

PHOTOGRAPHS
REDUCED COPY OF MEASURED DRAWING
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

TOWER GROVE PARK NORTH GATE
(Magnolia and Tower Grove Avenue Entrance)

HABS
MO,
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Location: Park headquarters at 4255 Arsenal Street, St. Louis, Missouri. The Gate is at the side of the intersection of Tower Grove and Magnolia Avenues.

USGS Webster Groves Quadrangle Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 15.738790. 4276730

Present Owner: City of St. Louis.

Significance: The North Gate serves as the vehicle entrance into Tower Grove Park from Tower Grove and Magnolia Avenues. The expense of the gate complex and its towering ornamental columns creates the impression of grandeur intended by its designer Henry Shaw and favored by landscape architects of the nineteenth century.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The north entrance was built between 1870 and 1892 (TGP Comptroller's Report 1868, p.124, 8/3/87). (MacAdam p.27.)
2. Architect: Henry Shaw.
3. Present Owner: City of St. Louis. For description of property, see the HABS report on Tower Grove Park. (MO-1137).
4. Builder, contractor, supplier, etc:

Francis Tunica: Supervised the construction and guttering.

John Mackay: Was Paid \$387.35 for completing grading and paving work (TGP Compt. 1868, p.124, 8/3/1871) and \$38.50 to move four stone columns from the courthouse to the park. 9/2/1869 (TGP check book April-Oct. 1869, TGP Box III).

Eyermann, Wengler, Konze, Hanrahan and Busking furnished white limestone (TGP Annual Report to the Board, 1871, p.7)

Fred Janzel and Michael Sheehan, and Frotzcher and Schlecht cut the stones (various listings and payments in TGP Compt. 1868, 1870-71).

Frotzcher and Schlecht were paid a total of \$3403.00 for stonework at the Magnolia Avenue entrance (north gate) 6/10/1870 (TGP check book May-July 1870, TGP Box III).

John Tacket's proposal to Henry Shaw to paint "Green" and "Gild" the ironwork on the "Front entrance on Grand Avenue" (Letters to Shaw, TGP Archives Letter: 6/6/1872).

P. J. Pawley & Bro. were contracted for a total of \$3301.33 for the iron work on the north gate (TGP 4/21/1871 TGP check book March 25-June 30 1871, TGP Box III).

Pawley & Co. agreement to furnish ironwork worth \$575. - price of \$5.75 per foot (Letter to Shaw 8/15/1875, TGP Archives).

Excelsior Iron Works, Thomas Howard and Co., six bills, October and November 1869, for columns and chimney caps (TGP Box III).

John Meise did the brick laying (TGP p.18, 8/27/1869).

Anton Suda, mason, laid the foundations of the two gatehouses for total \$381.00 7/30/1869 (TGP check book April - Oct. 1869, TGP Box III)

Isaiah C. Brown supplied the stone for the gatehouse foundations for \$455.12 8/2/1869 (TGP check book April - October 1869 TGP Box III).

E. Voigt & Co. supplied the glass and oil paint (TGP Compt.1869, p.38, 3/23/1870).

John May gilded the points on the iron gate for \$20.00 (TGP Comp. 1868, p.172, 6/29/1872).

J.W. Peck was paid \$601.42 for lumber provided for gatehouses. 1/20/1870 (TGP Check book Oct. 1869-May 1870, TGP Box III).

Chapman & Thorpe were paid \$82.50 for 1500 ft. of lumber for gatehouses 1/17/1870 (TGP Check book Oct. 1869 - May 1870; bills June-Nov. 1869, TGP Box III).

Adolphus Meir, Berlin, Germany, Stags were purchased (TGP Compt. 1868, p.150, 12/18/1871).

5. Original plans, construction, etc.: The total cost of the north gate construction project was \$12,000. (Henry Shaw's "Synopsis of Work Done in the Park from 1868-1872"). In 1870 the stone piers, coping, and columns were acquired from the lower floor of the St. Louis courthouse during renovations of that building (MacAdam, p.27). In 1871 iron gates and railings were added to the pedestrian and carriage gates and the premises were graded, paved and planted. Inside the Park, two hundred feet from the entrance, two stone piers were built, one on each side of the road, capped by zinc statues of stags (TGP Annual Report to the Board 1872.) These indicated the boundary of leasable property.

The gatehouse, located some 250' behind the north entrance, was demolished in January, 1913, in order to curb annual maintenance expenses, (Annual Report to the Board 1913, pp.8-9). A plan of the north gatehouse can be seen on the large framed map of Tower Grove Park, 7'-6" by 2'-6", ca.1873-75, probably drawn by Henry Thiele (TGP Compt. 1868, p.160, 3/30/1872, and p.204, 5/22/73), and presently located in the Missouri Botanical Garden Archives. An \$8,000 north gatehouse was built in 1869, during the same period of construction as the East Gatehouse and by the same craftsmen (Henry Shaw's Synopsis of Work Done in the Park from 1868-1872). Its designer was probably Francis Tunica.

6. Alterations and additions: In 1915 the ironwork of the north gateway was removed and traffic lighting installed. Cement gutters were constructed for \$369.71 (TGP Annual Report to the Board 1915, p.8).

B. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: View showing north gate and superintendent's house from northwest across Magnolia Avenue was published in MacAdam, p.26. In the center background is the roof of the greenhouse; right of center, the roof of the gatehouse, demolished 1913. (See HABS photocopy).

Foreground view of TGP planting with view of north gatehouse in center background next to superintendent's house - ca. 1900; in possession of TGP superintendent Miss Bernice Gurney, TGP Photo Archives.

A closeup view of north gate and superintendent's house from northwest, ca. 1875-1880, showing in the background roofs of the greenhouse, the crenelated storage structure (now removed), and the gatehouse (removed 1913), is in the Park Photo File (See HABS photocopy).

A 1906 view from southwest has been copied from the same file. (See HABS photocopy).

2. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Plans: Several concept sketches of elevations and plans are in the Missouri Botanical Garden Lehmann Library Archives. A framed plan 7'-6" by 2'-6", dated ca. 1873-1875, and probably drawn by Henry Thiele (TGP Comp. 1868, p. 160, 3/30/1875, and p. 204, 5/22/73) at approx. scale of 1" = 100'0", shows the floor plans of Park structures existing at the time. It is now in the Lehmann Library Archives.

Manuscripts, etc: Henry Shaw's "Synopsis of work done in the Park from 1868-1872," his Comptroller Report Books for Tower Grove receipts and vouchers for 1867-1889, are in the Lehmann Library Archives; the miscellaneous files

of information are catalogued at Tower Grove Park; the reports of the Board of Commissioners from 1860-1898 and the Superintendent's Monthly Reports 1960-1974 are in the custody of Park Superintendent Miss Bernice E. Gurney.

Deed Books: City Hall, Market Street, St. Louis, Missouri.

b. Secondary sources:

Annual Report of the Board of Commissioners Tower Grove Park.
St. Louis: Nixon-Jones Printing, 1899-1919.

_____. St. Louis: Arcade Print Shop, 1920.

_____. St. Louis: Mound City Press, 1921-1942.

_____. St. Louis: Allied Printing, 1942-1955.

MacAdam, David H., Tower Grove Park, St. Louis: R. P. Studley and Co., 1883.

Prepared by: Carolyn Hamm
Field Historian
National Park Service
St. Louis, Missouri
July, 1977

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The imposing masonry vehicular entrance to the Park has four monumental columns resting on pedestals and supporting ornamental ironwork.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description:

1. Over-all dimensions: The structure is 240' wide, and scallop-shaped. The central vehicular gate, 52' wide (center to center) is flanked by two pedestrian gates, 8' (center to center). The railing height is 6'-3". The pedestrian gate piers are 10' high; the center vehicular and terminal piers 25'-6" high.
2. Foundations: Red granite blocks.

3. Wall construction, finish and color:

The rough stone base of the scalloped-shaped wall is 1'-3" high and has a coping of dressed stone. The iron railings rise above it. They have spear-point tops and a row of crossed diagonal pieces running between the vertical elements at their base.

The limestone pedestrian piers are square shafts on pedestals. They are capped by cornices and ornamental cast-iron urns. The scalloped urns are of a multi-convex outline and are ornamented with floral motifs and hoop-shaped handles. The pedestrian gates are similar to the fence railing, but have an added row of circular motifs and an added row of curled x-shaped elements at their base. The tops of the double gates curve slightly upwards from the center to the pier edges.

The terminal and vehicular gate piers consist of granite-based, four-coursed limestone block pedestals surmounted by marble columns which support square limestone caps consisting of two stepped plates and a ball.

Color: The masonry and columns are plastered and painted white; the railings and urns are black.

4. Structural system: Load bearing masonry.

- C. Site: The wall curves inward toward the Park, creating a monumental entrance. It stands approximately 2800' east of Kings Highway and 4600' west of Grand Boulevard, on the south side of the intersection of Tower Grove and Magnolia Avenues. The former east gatehouse was inside it on the west side of the central cross drive, the superintendent's house being inside it to the east.

Prepared by: Peter Dessauer
Field Historian
National Park Service
August, 1975

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Tower Grove Park and Missouri Botanical Garden Project was jointly sponsored by the Historic American Buildings Survey of the National Park Service, the Board of Commissioners of Tower Grove Park, and the Board of Trustees of the Missouri Botanical Gardens.

Recorded under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, HABS Principal Architect, the project was conducted during the summer of 1974 and 1975 at the Historic American Buildings Survey field office at the Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis.

1974 Team: Robert Harvey, Project Supervisor, (Landscape Architect); Steven Bauer, Project Foreman, (architect, University of Kansas); Carolyn Hamm, project historian, (Cornell University); Patrick Ackerman, student assistant architect, (Washington University); Suzanne Fauber, student assistant landscape architect, (University of Virginia); and Carol Macht, student assistant landscape architect, (University of Michigan).

1975 Team: Stuart Mertz, A.S.L.A., project supervisor, (landscape architect); Steven Bauer, project foreman, (Columbia University); Peter Dessauer, project historian, (Clemson University); Lennard A. Roberts, student assistant architect, (Cornell University); John R. Temmink, student assistant architect, (University of Virginia); and Theodore Torpy, landscape architect, (WASO).

The drawings were revised by HABS architect Paul Dolinsky, and the written data were edited by HABS Architectural Historian Denys Peter Myers, in the HABS Washington office in 1982. The photographs were taken by HABS/HAER Photographer Jet Lowe in 1983.